

It will mean a stronger and more improved Medicare program. More services will be covered under the program, including free preventive services. The safety and quality of care will also be improved through payment and delivery system reforms to encourage better care.

In addition, reform will bring tighter oversight by creating new tools to fight waste, fraud and abuse within Medicare, as well as save costs by eliminating gross overpayments. Medicare itself will be protected by extending the solvency of the Medicare trust fund by 5 years.

Most importantly, our bill will mean lower drug costs for seniors by allowing the government to negotiate drug prices on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries and by closing the doughnut hole that thousands of seniors just in my district alone hit each year.

Mr. Speaker, security and stability is what reform means for seniors and why most recently 63 percent of AARP members support the House version of health care reform.

HEALTH CARE BILL WILL NEGATIVELY AFFECT SENIORS

(Mr. BUCHANAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, a new report says the health care bill that just passed the House will sharply reduce benefits to seniors. This report was done by President Obama's own administration. The Washington Post says it all. You can see it right here: "This bill would sharply reduce benefits for some senior citizens and could jeopardize access to care for millions of others."

My district has more than 267,000 seniors, the oldest congressional district in the country. I will not stand by while we devastate Medicare and raise taxes on individuals and small businesses. The report also warns that hospitals and nursing homes could stop taking Medicare all together.

I urge every Member of Congress to read this report so we can focus on real reform that does not punish our seniors.

SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CLINICS

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues of just one of the essential programs included in the Affordable Health Care for America Act. This bill includes the first dedicated Federal funding for school-based health clinics. School-based clinics garner strong bipartisan support, and this provision is one of the many bipartisan initiatives included in our health reform legislation. Today clinics in our schools are providing comprehensive and easily acces-

sible health care to nearly 2 million students across the country.

Students spend 5 days a week in school. It's the most logical place to offer primary and preventive care. Without this legislation, some students may have no access to health education, screenings and other primary services. At the height of the flu season, there is a need for supporting these clinics, these school-based health clinics, now more than ever. This is just one more reason of why I urge my colleagues to help pass real health reform now.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT THOMAS CLAIBORNE, UNITED STATES MA- RINE CORPS

(Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, there are many heroes who have served our Nation from the Sixth Congressional District of Colorado. Today I rise to pay tribute to one hero in particular. Marine Corps First Lieutenant Thomas Claiborne of Parker, Colorado. On October 29, 2009, First Lieutenant Claiborne was lost when his Marine Super Cobra collided with a Coast Guard C-130 during an escort mission off the coast of California. The lives of the crew of both aircraft were lost in this tragic training accident.

First Lieutenant Claiborne graduated from the University of Colorado magna cum laude on a full Navy ROTC scholarship in May 2006 with a degree in aerospace engineering and later earned his wings as a pilot in the United States Marine Corps. He is remembered as a fine young man, an outstanding student and a dedicated Marine Corps officer who had always dreamed of flying. First Lieutenant Thomas Claiborne was a shining example of the Marine Corps traditions. As a fellow marine, my deepest sympathies go out to his family and to all that knew him.

FINANCIAL SERVICES REFORM

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, President Bush's policies of deregulation, poor regulation, and lack of oversight of our financial system came to a head a little more than a year ago, and they brought us the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. As my friends on the other side of the aisle talk about unemployment and the stimulus package, it is their policies that made all of this necessary in the first place.

But the Democratic Congress is roaring back to protect consumers, to make our financial system more safe and sound, and to provide an orderly resolution of financial firms that have failed. Legislation being proposed right

now will provide unprecedented protections for American consumers through the Consumer Financial Protection Agency, put procedures in place to make sure taxpayers will never again have to bail out too-big-to-fail institutions, restore accountability and transparency so that problems are recognized and fixed before they threaten the entire economy, outlaw many of the most egregious practices, like subprime lending, and put our economy on a stable footing.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Congress is only a few steps away from passing a health care reform bill that is much needed for the American people. If we lose sight of our main goal to provide access coverage to everyone, especially the poor and the middle class that have already sacrificed or contributed so much so this country, I say, Ask not what you can do for the insurance companies but ask what you can do for the American people.

This is a humanitarian issue about responsible parents trying to provide for their families. The House bill ends the doughnut hole prescription drug coverage, ends copayment for preventive care, ends discrimination based on preexisting conditions, and provides more health care for our youth. The health bill means less red tape and less paperwork, more time with your families and doctors, lower premiums for older Americans.

This is extremely important at a time that the American families are stretching their budgets to the brink to make ends meet their needs and may have lost their jobs. Access to health care is not a privilege. It's a human right. I urge my colleagues to fight for the American family and pass real health care reform.

□ 1230

FINANCIAL REGULATORY REFORM

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Financial Services Committee's work to overhaul our financial system. Across the Nation, including my home State of Rhode Island, predatory lending and unregulated mortgage brokers led to unsustainable home loans and a drain on our economy. Now, with unemployment at 13 percent, my constituents, like many across the country, have had no other choice but to turn to credit cards to support their families and small businesses. Now what's happening is these struggling Rhode Islanders are subjected to the deceptive practices of credit card companies